

# SCIENCE & GOVERNMENT REPORT

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## Administration Gets Tough with Medical Schools

The nation's medical schools received some good and bad news from the Nixon Administration last week.

The bad news, from the viewpoint of many medical educators, was that the Administration has declared the era of medical school expansion at an end, it hopes to shift some of the burden for supporting medical education and research to state and private sources, it plans to pressure the medical schools to reorder their priorities to cope with health delivery problems which the Administration deems critically important, and it may downgrade biomedical research.

The good news, from the viewpoint of those same educators, is that the Administration does not plan to impose immediate funding cuts of such magnitude as to throw the schools into economic chaos before they have been able to line up other sources of support. However, that pledge brought little comfort to some top health experts who believe the Administration's budgetary policies have already crippled the scientific competence of many medical schools (see NIH story, page 4).

The Administration's intentions were described in an unusually blunt speech to the annual meeting of the Association of American Medical Colleges on Nov. 5 by Charles C. Edwards, assistant secretary for health in HEW, otherwise known as the nation's "top doctor" because of his key role in coordinating Administration policy for health research and education.

Edwards spoke against a background of expiring legislative authorities for the existing health manpower education programs. In less than eight months, on June 30, 1974, the Comprehensive Health Manpower Training Act, the Nurse Training Act, the Public Health Training Act, and the Allied Health Professions Personnel Training Act—virtually the entire statutory base for existing manpower programs—will terminate. Thus the Administration is in the process of preparing recommendations to Congress for a follow-on role for the federal government.

Edwards made it clear that the rationale behind the old programs—the need to expand the supply of medical manpower—will no longer be the guiding factor in federal policy. "There is little reason to adopt a manpower policy that involves investing large sums of money to further expand our capacity to train health professionals," he said. "... If the United States merely maintains the current output capacity of health professional institutions, by 1985 we will have 50 percent more physicians, 40 percent

more dentists, and 60 percent more registered nurses than we had in 1970." That would amount to nearly 220 doctors per 100,000 population, compared with 160 in 1970.

"Clearly we have moved beyond the point at which concerns about a shortage of physicians were genuine, if somewhat exaggerated," Edwards said. In fact, he added, "we may well be facing a doctor surplus." Thus expansion is out, and we should simply "seek to maintain present capacity."

Edwards' figures were based on the assumption that foreign trained physicians would continue to flood into the country in record numbers. At the end

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## In Brief

Former Congressman Emilio Q. Daddario, who has been lurking in the wings for months while Congress dallied over setting up its new Office of Technology Assessment (OTA), has finally been named OTA executive director for a six-year term at \$40,000 a year.

Leaders of the Association of American Medical Colleges have gotten the impression that the Nixon Administration will not yield gracefully to a federal court order requiring the release of \$140 million in funds impounded from various research training and medical school programs in fiscal 1973. The AAMC, which filed the successful litigation, has been told that, while many HEW officials have recommended against appealing the decision, the White House has ordered an appeal. If the lower court decision is eventually upheld, HEW will probably take the narrowest possible interpretation as to what programs and institutions are eligible for any of the released funds.

Some additional details have come out about the "synthetic" cigarettes that are being test marketed in Britain by the Courtaulds textiles and chemicals firm. Bearing the brandname Planet, they're actually half tobacco, half cellulose filler derived from woodpulp. Courtaulds says they're "safer," but pending some government pronouncement, its big rival in the synthetic race, the Imperial Group tobacco empire, is holding back on plans to build a \$25-million plant for producing its entry.

Two years ago, Israeli research administrators were privately expressing dismay over the quality of Soviet immigrants who presented themselves as trained scientists and engineers. The Israelis now report that the situation has changed and some top-flight talent is in the steady trickle of Soviet Jews.

**EDWARDS** (Continued from page 1.)

of 1970 roughly one of every five doctors in this country was a foreign medical graduate, and the percentage was even higher on hospital staffs, roughly one of every three. In some recent years, there have actually been more physicians entering the US from abroad than were graduated from American medical schools.

This influx would seem to constitute a talent rape of unconscionable proportions. Typically a foreign doctor from an underdeveloped country comes here for advanced training, learns skills which are useless in his home country, becomes enamored of the American pay scales and way of life, and decides to stay here. One recent report indicates there are more Thai graduates in New York than are serving Thailand's entire rural population of 28 million. About one-third of the foreign doctors here came from the developing countries of Asia.

The Administration has decided not to interfere with this flow of talent, according to several speakers at the AAMC meeting who claimed to be privy to Administration thinking, on the theory that the world is better off if there is a free exchange of

people and ideas among nations. Edwards suggested that "the real issue" is whether the foreign medical graduates deliver a high enough "quality of care" for the American population. At any rate, Edwards indicated, even if the influx fell to zero and stayed there, the physician supply in the US would still swell based on existing medical school capacity.

Thus "all of us—not just government, but the whole health community, public and private—have to reassess our priorities in the manpower field and perhaps adopt some fundamentally different ones," Edwards said. "...The task the medical schools now face is to work toward solution of problems that relate not to aggregate numbers of physicians, but to specialty and geographic maldistribution, physician productivity, the underrepresentation of women and minorities among the health professions, and a number of other issues."

And just to make sure that the medical schools—which Edwards chastised for failing to make "an enlightened response to the kind of problems that affect the whole system of health care"—now get down to business and accept a "full measure of responsibility" for solving health delivery problems they have traditionally ignored, there will be an array of federal fiscal prods. One possibility, for example, is to base federal capitation grants, not on size of enrollment, but rather on the development of programs that address the effectiveness of medical care.

Meanwhile, basic biomedical research is apt to be downgraded. As Edwards put it, "A large percentage of faculty time is spent on research and perhaps 50 percent of the students in our medical schools are not candidates for the medical degree. Is this a proper response to the problems we face in health care delivery? And does it justify substantial institutional support?"

Edwards made it clear that medical schools should start looking for other sources of support than the US treasury. He mentioned two possibilities—state funds (while the federal deficit is climbing, the states are showing an aggregate budget surplus) and increased tuition. "Tuition now amounts to about 4 percent of the income of American medical schools, about half of what this source provided 15 years ago," he said. "We simply have to question whether taxpayers should continue to be expected to subsidize tuition costs for medical students, but not for students in other fields whose income expectations fall far below that of physicians."

But Edwards indicated that the Administration will not recklessly shut off the federal financial spigot. "We cannot, through some mistaken sense of fiscal responsibility, throw the medical and other health professional schools into an even deeper economic crisis," he said. "We cannot, in my judgment, sharply reduce federal support without a clear idea of where the schools will be able to turn for the funding they obviously need." Then, just to be sure his chastened audience caught those reassuring words in an otherwise tough speech, Edwards repeated that last sentence.—PMB.

## New Cost Controls Vex Research Hospitals

A new set of regulations to control medical charges, proposed on Nov. 6 by the Cost of Living Council, is apt to fall with particular severity on many research-oriented teaching hospitals.

The regulations replace the present controls—which limit the price a hospital can charge for specific services but not the frequency with which it provides those services—with a new system that limits the total charge made to patients. In general, hospitals will be held to an annual increase of 7.5 percent in the average charge for a patient's stay, with larger increases allowed under specified circumstances.

The theory behind the proposed regulations, which are described in the Nov. 7 *Federal Register*, is that hospitals will now be forced to make certain that all services provided are actually needed. But leaders of the Association of American Medical Colleges are concerned that community hospitals will now limit themselves to "simple tonsillectomies" and shunt the more complex and costly cases to the teaching hospitals, where sophisticated technology and an intensive style of care may necessitate increases above 7.5 percent.

The Council will accept comments on the proposed regulations until Dec. 1 before putting a final version into effect. The controls on health costs are due to expire on April 30 when Congressional authorization for the price control program runs out. But it's possible that an effort will be made to retain some control over health costs because they are considered potentially inflationary.

## Grant Swinger Hails Monkey Head Transplants

Following is another in a series of occasional interviews with Dr. Grant Swinger, director of the Center for the Absorption of Federal Funds.

Q. Dr. Swinger, what are the principal programs of the Center?

A. One of our aims is to support the public understanding of science, to the point where the man in the street won't mistake the two neutrinos for an Italian dance team or stannous fluoride for a Russian novelist.

Q. How is this to be accomplished?

A. The joy of it is that it cannot be accomplished, since the man in the street is sensibly busy with other matters. This necessitates frequent redoubling of efforts, based on planning sessions which we regularly sponsor with the support of various foundations.

Q. Why do they provide support?

A. Because they have become persuaded, with our assistance, of the difficulties that will arise from public lack of understanding of such matters as weak interactions.

Q. What are these difficulties?

A. Beats me, but it's a living. There's a real problem. We took a poll and most people think DNA is a Dutch news agency; fellatio a character in Shakespeare, and cunnilingus the Irish National Airline. A lot of ignorance out there.

Q. Well, how do you perform your work?

A. We tell the physicists, for example, that if they find a particle every couple of months, we can keep them in clover, and if they can't find one, they can get by by predicting that it should be there even if it isn't. Good copy, especially for the major Sunday papers.

Q. What about other fields of research?

A. In medicine, the growth industry is ethics. Very big. It lags now and then, but you can always expect a boost from some unexpected quarter. That guy who's been transplanting monkey heads should get a medal. We'll be running symposiums on that one for years. It came along just in time, too, what with heart transplants pretty well played out.

Q. Who attends these symposiums?

A. Oh, same old crowd usually. We've got a package: a few scientists, a dropout scientist who can't stand it anymore, a priest, a poet, and a congressman. They do kidneys, hearts, corneas—you name it. Now they'll be doing heads.

Q. What do they discuss?

A. Well, it's one thing or another, but there's always a lot of mileage in the old routine of defining death. You know, dead is dead and there's not much room for doubt, but our boys can go on forever. We even had a guy who wanted to argue that you're not dead until your hair stops growing, but the public's not ready for that one.

Q. What else?

A. Oh, we're moving into interdisciplinarity.

Q. What's that?

A. Mixing together people who really have no

reason to be together. For example, a sociologist, a chemist, and a textile historian. You've never seen three people with less to say to each other, let alone get any work done. But the foundations go berserk when you cook up a team like that, especially if you explain that it's necessary to transport them to the Carribean in February.

Q. What happens?

A. We do it up nicely. We put out a little booklet titled, "Conversations," or "Dialogue," and we mail it around. You know, it's supposed to enrich the atmosphere. No one reads it, but no one minds receiving it. I see them all the time on coffee tables in offices or sticking out of piles on desks. Thin, but with fantastic covers.

Q. What else?

A. Well, I think we're getting a pretty good thing going with the "shrinks." Guiltiest feeling bunch I've ever encountered, and they offer no end of possibilities. You know, "Psychiatry and Law," "Psychiatry and Religion," "Psychiatry and Foreign Policy." No harm done, and it must be a relief for them to get away from their patients.

Q. Are there other activities at the Center?

A. Oh, yes. We've just issued the first in a series of pamphlets for unwed mothers. It's called, "You and Radio Astronomy." Paid for by the population bunch. Next we'll have the "Senior Citizens Guide to Industrial Enzymes," and then we'll do, "Mathematics and the Mid-East Crisis."

Q. But what are the overall objectives?

A. As I've tried to indicate, we are aiming for improved public understanding of these and related issues.

We've got to develop public consciousness to the point where when you say, "Grant's Tomb," they'll automatically think of the Office of Management and Budget.

Q. Thank you Dr. Swinger.—DSG

### Concorde: Spending Never Stops

Propelled by the argument that we can't quit now, the Anglo-French Concorde SST partnership continues on its way to being a technical triumph and a financial disaster. With most of the test program completed, and commercial models already in production, one of the few routes that shows any promise for substantial traffic is the long London-Johannesburg haul. But it's so long that a refueling stop along the way will be necessary. Lagos fits in nicely in terms of distance and traffic patterns, but the runway there is only 9000 feet and Concorde needs 10,950. Backers of the high speed albatross are now trying to persuade the British government to finance the extension with foreign aid funds, at a cost of about \$5 million. They're arguing, naturally, that the amount is trivial in view of the \$1-billion plus that's already gone into development.



## NIH Accused of Crippling Medical Institutions

Sharp disagreement has broken out between the past and present management of the National Institutes of Health concerning the agency's responsibility for protecting the fiscal health and program balance of grantee institutions.

To hear James A. Shannon, the administrator who presided over NIH's amazing growth from 1955 to 1968, tell it, the Nixon Administration's budgetary policies have caused such havoc at many less than prominent medical schools that "their science base

has been destroyed," an event which Shannon greatly deplores.

But to hear Robert S. Stone, the New Mexico educator who was unexpectedly elevated to the NIH directorship by the Nixon Administration last May, explain it, the stability of medical institutions is not a primary responsibility of NIH, thus the complaints, by implication, are misdirected.

The two men did not engage in face-to-face debate; rather, each spoke at separate meetings on health research policy in recent weeks.

Shannon's comments were made at the fall meeting of the National Academy of Sciences during an Oct. 23 symposium which turned into a verbal assault on Administration health research policies. Drawing on data supplied by his old cronies at NIH, Shannon argued that many institutions have suffered from recent NIH budgetary policies that emphasize cancer and heart research while cutting funds for new competitive research grants and graduate training.

He noted that the top 20 medical schools in terms of NIH support, generally considered the most prestigious medical institutions in the nation, have fared rather well financially. As a group, they actually received more money from NIH in fiscal 1973 than they had the previous year, as well as a higher proportion of NIH's total grants to medical schools. Seventeen of these institutions received more than \$10 million from NIH in 1973, whereas only 13 had exceeded that figure the previous year.

But the less prestigious schools, ranking lower in terms of NIH support, were often badly hurt, Shannon said. Nine medical schools suffered drops in NIH support ranging from 24 percent to 40 percent, while 15 others suffered cuts of 12 to 20 percent.

He acknowledged that these schools would not be destroyed as institutions, but he said their science base will be, with the result that their educational programs will be "less satisfactory than the ideal," since the traditional blend of education, research, and service will be distorted. Shannon considered this deplorable because the 20 lowest medical schools in terms of NIH support probably graduate as many physicians as the 20 highest.

Criticizing the Administration's "unconscionable" decision to allocate some \$600 million a year to the "tenuous idea that you can cure cancer" by a crash program, Shannon suggested that the Administration could surely find some money to help institutions remain stable.

He was joined in his assault by Ivan L. Bennett, Jr., who was deputy director of the now defunct White House Office of Science and Technology during the Johnson Administration and who is now dean of the medical school at New York University, which ranked 14th on the NIH grantee list in 1973 with awards totaling \$12.1 million.

In a speech designed to be provocative, Bennett charged that the Nixon Administration has put out

### *Science and Sports: Does E. Germany Have a New Pill?*

The annals of science in the service of humanity have of late been enriched by the application of anabolic steroids—otherwise known as the Bulk Bomb—to athletic performance, the virtue of these compounds being their capacity for building solid muscle far beyond nature's intent. Outside of the insult delivered to the spirit of sport for the sake of sport, the only damage involved has been to long-established world records and the femininity of lady performers who imbibe the stuff. It renders them hirsute where normally they are not, and since this is easily detected in the physical examinations that now normally precede serious international athletic competitions, consumption of the stuff is thought to be confined to men, in whom it is difficult to detect, though researchers have been working on this problem, too, and with some success.

Now, however, international sports circles are buzzing with speculation that East Germany's biomedical enterprise has scored a breakthrough in developing a non-detectable compound for enhancing the performance of female performers. The evidence simply is an incredible elevation in performance by the East German women relative to their achievements just a short time ago. At last year's Munich Olympics, for example, East German women failed to win one gold medal, but a year later, at the Belgrade World Championships, they won 10 of 14 gold medals. Similar results have occurred in other fields of sports and competitions, leading a former president of Britain's Amateur Swimming Association, Alf Price, to observe that "this East German jumpup in the past year is staggering. I can't believe it is a result of their coaching alone. Their coaches have nothing that ours haven't. Nor are their techniques vastly different."

Sports officials say, however, that none of the East German female competitors showed any of the tell-tale signs associated with the use of the anabolic steroids. Concludes one member of the Medical Commission of the International Olympic Committee: "It is possible there is a new drug, a new material for which we are not testing."

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## SIPI Launches Drive to Aid North Vietnam

A task force called Scientific Aid to Indochina (SAI) has been organized by the Scientists' Institute for Public Information (SIPI) to determine the effects of the war on Indochina's environment and restore it to healthy productivity. Some 10,000 members of the scientific community will soon receive "Dear Colleague" letters, asking them to contribute equipment, books, expertise and money in what Barry Commoner, chairman of SIPI's board of directors, has called "an act of personal restitution for the devastation of Indochina." Joining Commoner at a Nov. 8 press conference were Arthur W. Galston, SAI's chairman and Yale plant physiologist, and Arthur H. Westing, professor of botany at Windham College in Vermont.

"When the peace was negotiated," asserted Commoner, "the President said that funds for North Vietnam's restoration would soon be available. Somehow they got lost. Clearly the government has thus far failed to meet its obligation of helping North Vietnam recover from the assault of weapons... Rome plows, bombs and herbicides" whose effects were "largely not understood" by the Americans who used them.

The press conference was hosted on Capitol Hill by Sen. Gaylord Nelson (D-Wisc) who has introduced an Ecological Damage Assessment bill which

would provide funds to determine what long-term ecological effects were caused by the war.

Westing has made four trips to Indochina; the latest one in response to an invitation from the government of North Vietnam to SIPI/SAI. Westing and a zoologist from the University of Montana, E.W. Pfeiffer, toured North Vietnam in August and met there with the State Committee for Science and Technique. The committee suggested that since agriculture was North Vietnam's main resource, what it needed most was a research institute for agricultural botany. The committee offered to supply the building, and SAI agreed to provide the initial equipment, chemicals, seeds, and to train personnel.

Galston will direct the establishment of the institute and give technical instruction, but the institute will be the sole property of the North Vietnamese. SIPI estimates it needs \$100,000 to carry out the venture, part of which has been pledged by small foundations.

In April about 25 scientists are expected to leave for North Vietnam. They should watch their step, however, since Pfeiffer and Westing report an "emergency need" for mine detectors to clear the farm land. — KB

**NIH** (Continued from page 4.)

"an enormous amount of official rhetoric... vague, gassy, and pretentious" concerning its health goals, but "well-funded programs truly calculated to achieve a set of coordinated goals have yet to materialize."

Bennett particularly complained that the "budget-slashers" who prepared the Administration's 1974 spending plans showed little concern for the stability of the medical schools which are presumably "essential" to whatever national health strategy is devised. "The abrupt cutbacks proposed in the 1974 budget represent the grossest sort of short-term budgetary expediency," Bennett said, "—false economies that will, in a dismayingly short time, so cripple this indispensable set of institutions that it will take many years to repair them."

If there is any merit in that analysis, it does not seem a matter of priority concern at NIH today, judging from a speech presented by Stone to the annual meeting of the Association of American Medical Colleges on Nov. 4. Stone, who was vice president and medical dean at the University of New Mexico, acknowledged that medical schools have such difficulty financing teaching and service activities that the cupboard is left "rather bare for research" except insofar as the federal government supports it. As a result, he said, "the mature medical centers have become heavily dependent on federal—mostly NIH—research awards, to the degree that their autonomy in choosing the most appropriate subjects and modes of research activity, from their point of view, might be uncomfortably limited." Similarly, "the immature institutions sometimes find difficulty attaining critical mass in particular research fields."

But Stone indicated that those problems are for the schools to worry about, not NIH. "The rationale

for the federal support of biomedical research is not primarily the strengthening and balancing of medical institutions, laudable as this might seem to many who are directly affected," he said. "The first-order imperative is the solution of problems of human disease: prevention, or diagnosis, therapy, and rehabilitation."

Stone also indicated that the days when the biomedical research community is allowed to exert major impact on the direction of NIH programs may be over. "While the preceding two decades of NIH programs have succeeded admirably with much of the impetus for program development coming from the outside community," he said, "the thrust of our present-day responsibilities requires that NIH first choose program directions responsive to public needs and priorities as well as to scientific criteria."

Much of Stone's presentation consisted of slides depicting trends in NIH support of outside researchers. The thrust of these slides was that NIH support of extramural research increased about 20 percent in constant dollars between fiscal years 1967 and 1974, largely because of steep increases in contracts and large project and center grants made by the cancer, heart, and child health institutes. Meanwhile, the extramural research programs supported elsewhere in NIH have declined 10 percent and regular research grants have declined overall.

The most encouraging news for researchers concerned about this trend is that Stone's "current intent" is that the traditional individual research project grant "shall continue to be the major support mechanism" at NIH. Whether that means a 51-49 or 90-10 majority was not specified. Stone also asserted that "We must make it possible for the little known investigator and the developing institution to receive support."

## NSF Wrestles with Budget Allocation Problem

The National Science Foundation is struggling to solve what it calls "a \$31 million problem" caused by Congressional action on the NSF budget for the current fiscal year.

The problem stems from the fact that Congress cut the NSF budget by \$13 million, appropriating only \$628.5 million instead of the \$641.5 million requested in the Nixon Administration's budget for fiscal year 1974. At the same time, Congress stipulated minimum spending levels for several programs deemed particularly important by the legislators. These minima will require the Foundation to spend about \$18.3 million more on these programs than was planned under the Foundation's budget request.

### Nixon's Energy Goal Deemed Unreachable

President Nixon's pledge to make the US self-sufficient in energy resources by 1980 is provoking scoffs from some experts in the energy research community.

In his televised energy address on Nov. 7, the President reiterated his previously announced plans to spend \$10 billion over five years on energy R&D. He likened his proposal to the Manhattan Project, which developed the atomic bomb in World War II, and the Apollo Project, which placed a man on the moon in 1969. Both projects demonstrated, he said, that "whenever the American people are faced with a clear goal and they're challenged to meet it, we can do extraordinary things."

The chief new element in the R&D portion of Nixon's broadcast was that the Administration will ask Congress to provide organizational thrust to this effort by immediately creating the proposed Energy Research and Development Administration without tying it to the proposed Department of Energy and Natural Resources, which is sure to get bogged down in territorial squabbles among competing interests.

But some energy policy experts consulted by SGR suggested that Nixon's goal of self-sufficiency can't possibly be achieved by the end of the decade. "The idea that we can become self-sufficient by 1980 on the basis of an R&D program that won't be started until 1974 is ludicrous," said one. "It takes six years to build a plant when you know how to do it."

There was also a wait-and-see attitude among researchers who suspect that the 1974 budget won't be dramatically different from its predecessors, but will simply provide for incremental growth to existing programs.

One cynic, who noted Nixon's parallel between his energy push and the Apollo moon project, carried the analogy a step farther. Kennedy pledged to reach the moon by the end of his decade at least in part to wipe out memories of the Bay of Pigs debacle. And now, Nixon, beset with his own catastrophes, has made a similar pledge to end his decade in triumph.

The big losers in this budgetary tangle will be those NSF programs which are not protected by minimum spending requirements. They will have to absorb the entire \$13 million cut in the overall budget, plus another \$18.3 million cut to allow additional funds to be transferred to the Congressionally favored programs.

About \$5 million of the cut will fall on the Very Large Array (VLA), a radioastronomy facility, destined for New Mexico, for which NSF requested \$10 million but for which Congress only appropriated \$5 million. (The funding was almost eliminated entirely until New Mexico politicians intervened to save a prestigious pork barrel project for their home state.) Most of the remaining cuts will be allocated by NSF in consultation with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Thomas E. Jenkins, NSF's assistant director for administration, told SGR that cuts will be distributed "pretty much across the board," so that many programs will be "shaved a little," but few, if any, gutted.

The most serious problem, in Jenkins' view, will occur in NSF's program of Research Applied to National Needs (RANN), where the overall budget was cut by \$7.2 million while projects relating to energy research and earthquake engineering will be required to spend \$5.3 million more than originally requested. That means that RANN projects outside the energy-earthquake areas will have to be cut by \$12.5 million, or roughly 25 percent. "That's a significant cut, a real serious one," says Jenkins.

The big winners in the budgetary derby, in addition to the energy-earthquake programs, were science education improvement, institutional improvement, graduate student support, and oceanographic vessel construction, all of which were awarded minimum funding levels above what the Administration wanted to spend.

Last year Congress set minima for the education programs and was outraged to find that NSF, when it developed its plans for spending the money appropriated, at first seemed to ignore the stipulated minima. Then, after NSF had been clubbed into at least a semblance of compliance with the will of Congress, the education programs were gutted anyway when the Office of Management and Budget impounded sums intended for science education.

Congress seems determined that this shall not happen again. The House even passed authorizing legislation for NSF that would have prohibited such "selective impoundment" of NSF funds, but that provision was dropped when Senate conferees argued that impoundment should be attacked on a broad front rather than at NSF alone. Nevertheless, Congressional science specialists have warned NSF, as one of them put it, that "you people must follow the law."

Jenkins said NSF intends to comply with the latest Congressional spending directives, but OMB has not yet been heard from. It's possible that, with the Administration battered from all sides on bigger issues, and facing dozens of lawsuits to prevent impoundment, OMB may lose its zeal to defy Congress.



## Britain: Old Ties with US are Loosening Fast

London. Britain remains the most popular destination as well as way station for American researchers on the international circuit. But while American Anglomania is particularly durable, the England of yore—from pub to laboratory—is perishing swiftly, and the change is accompanied by a decline in the “special relationship” that has traditionally drawn the two countries together in all sorts of things, science prominent among them.

The transition is not accompanied by any ill will toward old colleagues across the Atlantic. In fact, cordiality prevails and the flow of scholarly traffic remains so heavy and natural that it occurs without the formal inter-governmental compacts that are necessary when political relations are difficult, such as is the case with the Eastern bloc countries and now the People's Republic of China. Nevertheless, the longstanding Anglo-American love affair has now deteriorated into mere friendship, with the Anglo side of the relationship concentrating its energies on Europe, while the Americans tinker with the problems of relations with Russia and China.

Language, trade, personal friendships, and, most of all, the American nuclear “umbrella,” constitute binders that easily are misinterpreted as signs that things go on as before. And it is especially easy to misread these signs at a time when Britain's long-simmering decision to be “European” is by no means wholehearted, fully digested, or clearly defined. A sizeable body of public opinion here holds that joining the Common Market was a costly blunder that has produced little but an acceleration of inflation and an erosion of political sovereignty, and that the decision should be reversed quickly.

But legally and to a growing extent spiritually, Britain is in, and the thrust of government policy is to knit Britain into Europe wherever possible, and cooperative European research efforts—both in and out of the Common Market framework—offer many possibilities.

Following the Vietnam war, the Watergate saga, which the press and TV follow here in exacting detail, is widely viewed as evidence of a deepdown American instability that suddenly has people here, of all political stripes, singing praise for the integrity and structural wisdom of Britain's political institutions. And the innumerable snubs that the US has inflicted on its special “ally”—such as failing to advise her beforehand of the mideast nuclear alert, and then denouncing her for failure to endorse this latest episode in brinkmanship—simply reinforces the feeling that, like it or not, the focus of Britain's international ties must shift away from the US.

At a personal level, these political sentiments are mixed with the feeling that, because of crime, pollution, urban decay, corruption, and so forth—all of which are generously reported here to present the worst possible picture of an admittedly bad situation—the US is no longer a “nice place to be.” This sense of change is symbolized by a high-level British research and educational administrator, who, despite long and close associations with the US, remarked recently that of late, he feels much

more at home in Copenhagen or Paris, than in New York or Washington. “It's been a subtle change,” he explained, “but I can't help but feel that the US has gone off on a tangent that makes it far more ‘foreign’ to me than Europe.”

In terms of specifics, the ongoing linkage of Britain to Europe involves a process in which the realities are often less visible or proclaimed than the illusions. Since the Common Market bureaucracy in Brussels possesses a mighty public relations apparatus and a yen to be the center of multinational affiliation, it has tended to evoke skepticism about Europe coming together because of its long record of loudly announced plans that quietly come to naught. Thus Euratom, the Market's atomic energy agency, has never been more than a small and stunted version of the US Atomic Energy Commission that it was originally intended to emulate in non-military undertakings. When these failed to prosper because of the desire of the major participants to concentrate on their own national programs, Euratom simply coasted for several years on a caretaker budget, and then, amid much self-congratulation, received authority to chuck the nuclear emphasis and take off on the well-traveled route of atomic labs trying to justify their existence with other lines of research, principally in environmental research. It's too early to pronounce judgment on the progress of that journey, but against the background of similar efforts elsewhere, plus the absence of any great enthusiasm for this effort within the Market, it is difficult to find grounds for optimism.

Meanwhile, distrust of the US as Europe's principal supplier of enriched uranium has provided the motive for setting up the strictly commercial enrichment ventures described in SGR Vol. III No. 19. These collaborative efforts which are taking place outside the Market structure, have not been carried out in secrecy, but neither have they received the publicity that normally accompanies the Market's sterile endeavors.

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**BRITAIN** (Continued from page 7.)

Similarly, Britain has joined with West Germany and France as an equal partner in sharing the cost and use of a high-flux beam reactor, located at Grenoble, rather than incurring the expense of building one herself.

In response to traffic patterns that traditionally have resulted in European scientists mixing more with their American colleagues than with each other, the research councils of several nations have earmarked funds for European exchanges. For example, Britain's Science Research Council has developed a series of exchanges with the French Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique that have brought research groups together for symposia in control engineering, amorphous materials, and organo-metallic chemistry.

In space, the financial problems of our NASA have ironically created the most favorable conditions yet for Europe to pool its resources for a significant presence in space research. European space history has heretofore been a muddle of under-financed and fragmentary efforts motivated by a desire to possess space capability but without a willingness to pay the cost. The result has been a series of disastrous efforts to retread bits and pieces of military technology into a mini-NASA. However, under pressure from the American program, Europe has now bought into the post-Apollo program and, at a cost of about \$400 million, is committed to designing and building the Spacelab that will be carried into orbit by the reusable space shuttle. In the context of the tight NASA budget, the European-built Spacelab is not makework or condescending charity for poor relations who seek the prestige of being in space but don't want to pay for it. It is an indispensable part of the shuttle program. Clearly, it draws Europe close to the US, but the scale of effort is such that it also necessitates Europe coming together for the achievement of clearcut goals that heretofore were lacking.

For Americans who share the widely held view that Britain is a miraculously civilized place—well, it still is, relatively speaking. But the pace of change here, mostly for the worse, most would agree, is such that Anglophiles would be well advised to hurry over for a last look. Though few Americans care to admit it, a principal source of their affection was that the dollar went a long way here in commanding goods and services that were beyond reach at home. However, with the dollar now twice devalued, and many prices here having risen to American levels, cheap, polite help—so easily confused with civility by those who are being helped—is no longer so abundant. Even here, shop clerks have a way of being less gracious when unemployment is at a record low and the newspapers are crammed with advertisements for help.

Since the government's restrictions on wage increases are easiest to apply to public service organizations, transit, schools and hospital services have experienced a great drainage of employees into jobs where, in one way or another, the wage lid can be evaded. One result is that London's famous public transit system is so desperately short of workers that service schedules have been severely cut back. The underground used to be a swift and reasonably comfortable means of getting around London, but in recent months a rush hour ride leaves nothing to choose between here and New York.

Britain's European neighbors have solved their manpower problems by importing literally millions of Turks, Greeks, North Africans and other southern economic unfortunates to do their dirty work as bus boys, street cleaners, transit workers, and hospital attendants. But the racist spirit is strong here, and there is no desire to fire it up by admitting a new wave of dark skinned immigrants.

There will always be an England, but from now on, more European than trans-Atlantic, and far removed from the nostalgic version of which so many Americans are enamored.—DSG

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